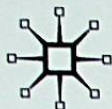


# The New Silk Road

How a Rising Arab World is  
Turning Away from the West and  
Rediscovering China

Ben Simpfendorfer

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The Arab world is rising. Dubai's skyline is jammed with gleaming skyscrapers. Foreign banks are opening in Syria's business districts. Cairo's five-star hotels are filled by Arab holiday makers. Yet, the Arab world isn't rising alone. It is matched by an emerging China. The timing isn't a coincidence. The two are historic powers once connected by one of the world's great trade corridors.

*The New Silk Road* is a ground-breaking study of the changes taking place. The author uses a mixture of analysis and first-hand accounts from the streets in Beijing, Cairo, Dubai, and Riyadh. Speaking Arabic and Chinese, the author offers an unrivalled view of how the Arab world is turning away from the West and rediscovering China. *The New Silk Road* is essential reading to understanding the changes taking place.

"Simpfendorfer is not just a good economist but an artful story teller who entertains as he educates. He has written a highly readable treatment of a topic of great strategic significance – the rebalancing of global wealth and power through the emerging relationship between the Islamic world and China. The New Silk Road is a glimpse of the future that is easy to get into and hard to put down."

– **Chas W. Freeman, Jr.**, *former US chargé at Beijing and Ambassador to Saudi Arabia*

"Despite the global economic crisis, the trajectory of the Arab and Chinese economies still match the soaring skylines of Dubai and Shanghai. Furthermore, as Ben Simpfendorfer bracingly illustrates, these are not isolated events but rather the resurrection of a Silk Road symbiosis. For all the region's troubles, this book places the Persian Gulf back where it geographically belongs: at the center of Eurasia and bending towards the overwhelming gravity of China."

– **Parag Khanna**, *author of 'The Second World' and Senior Research Fellow at the New America Foundation*

"The macroeconomics of China's rise and the nitty-gritty of Chinese businesses bargaining on the ground in the Arab world are like Parisian courtesans and Eskimos: worlds apart, and nearly impossible to reconcile into a single narrative. But Ben Simpfendorfer's *The New Silk Road* provides a Rosetta Stone to achieve just such a reconciliation. With an economist's toolbox for mapping aggregate growth, and a diarist's talent for capturing the minute, human interactions that join executives and officials from these two ancient worlds, he makes the logic, limits and significance of Sino-Arab engagement understandable."

– **Daniel Rosen**, *Visiting Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and Adjunct Professor at Columbia University*

"We often assume that the Middle East and China will have stronger links to the US and Europe than to each other. But there is a natural economic synergy between the population centers in East Asia and the resources under the desert in West Asia. Simpfendorfer doesn't just look at the data; he also shows that growing trade has created a set of stories that increasingly link together the peoples at both ends of the new Silk Road." – **Brad Setser**, *Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations*



Photograph: Mark Horn/  
John Lund/Getty Images

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